

Death to Tennis – William Watson Interview



William Watson thinks fashion takes itself too seriously. Since he founded New York-based brand, [Death of Tennis \(DTT\)](#) in 2012, Williams has sought to inject playfulness and humor into everything he touches. Recently, we asked Watson to collaborate with us at [O.N.S](#) to combine our philosophies of comfort and tactility with a touch of DTT’s “adult streetwear” to create [DOMANI](#)—Italian for “tomorrow”. After studying in at the London Royal College for fashion design in the ’90s, Watson moved to Venice, Italy where a friend invited him to live with

them rent-free. There, Watson mingled amongst Italian party-goers and heard the word “Domani” for the first time as an exclamation about going back to work the next day. In this interview, we talk about the concept behind how the idea of “tomorrow” translates to athleisure for work and play, favorite DOMANI pieces, and classic films that inspired the collection.

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What's the story behind the name Death to Tennis (DTT)?

Will: At this point in the brand's progression, I have stopped explaining the name. At this point, I am looking for what the name means to the viewer/consumer/user. I am more interested in what it evokes in you!

Could you summarize the design concept behind your DOMANI collab with ONS?

Will: [With the O.N.S collab](#) I wanted to utilize the opportunity to develop areas that we have not touched on in the mainline. I wanted to explore the ever-growing athleisure market and see where the gaps are and how DTT & O.N.S could fill them. My conclusion is that what is missing in the athletic arena is humor and truth—something I am not afraid to tackle. This is what lead to the collection and its name DOMANI (Italian for tomorrow). We talk to the truth of the real uses of athletic clothing and the truth of the human weakness of procrastination. How many sneakers have never been run in? How many sweatpants that have never gotten off the couch? The goal of DOMANI is to deliver that truth with humor and without judgment. We give you garments that allow truth and dreams.



How would you say this collection fits in with your overall brand philosophy?

Will: I have been working in the business now for a long time, and during that time I have learned one important fact: Enjoy the day to day and enjoy the process. Fashion really does take itself way too seriously and if we can deliver great products and inject some humor into people's lives and make them look cool AF, then I am doing what I want to do. The [O.N.S collab](#) process has helped me cement the DTT philosophy, where the humor, truth, and quality, all fell into place. So I would say the collection fits well.

What do you think of the more recent trend of sportswear and technical fabrics entering high fashion? Do you feel like it's responding to a cultural shift?

Will: Fashion always follows the youth and sportswear/comfort is king right now. DTT started as a brand with an adult streetwear fit at a time when normcore was king. Big bushy beards, check shirts and painted on pants were everywhere. So as a brand, we had to wait for the market to catch up and have watched the streetwear trend go crazy over the last few years.

High fashion is all trend-based. I see the trends running past sportswear through hippy onto cowboy. Next might even be 50's James Dean Americana and nationalism. Right now we're seeing phase [of sportswear] but due to social media, trends cycle way quicker than they ever did.

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What's your favorite piece in the DOMANI collection? Why?

Will: Hard question because I love it all. The [nylon tech pieces](#) are great and I cannot wait to start wearing the full Swish set in [black camo](#) now and later wear the [orange camo](#), as it is the perfect color for the spring. Though I think the piece I love the most is the dramatic, super soft [Fin First Double Knit Poncho](#). It's a statement piece and based on an old DTT staple we redesigned to make it more functional and aerodynamic. It looks good on the street keeps and you warm but is also designed for you to cuddle up with your significant other and use it as a blanket. Function meets laziness.

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You’ve talked a lot about how film influences your designs. Any film recommendations?

Will: When I initially thought about this concept, I thought of *Marathon Man* (1976) starring Dustin Hoffman, Roy Scheider, and Laurence Olivier. It’s a movie that I could not get out of my head. There is a scene in the movie Dustin is running from his captors, bare-chested mouth bleeding in the dead of night with no help in sight. Dark I know, but I think NYC can make a person feel like that sometimes. As an expat I have a love for the city at 4 am. It’s quiet but never sleeping, unlike home [in Newcastle] where everything closed by 9 pm.

As I walked through Soho and the LES late last night with all the new buildings and money, I laughed. I was remembering the movie *After Hours* (1985) by Martin Scorsese. In that movie, a businessman is stuck downtown after dark and the film traces his traumatic surreal journey getting back to his safe uptown world. 40 years ago the area was a no go zone after dark. But I think that’s why we love NYC. [DOMANI](#) like NYC is always looking to tomorrow.

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**Your brand is 8 years old, how do you think it's evolved since you started?
Where do you see Death to Tennis going in the future?**

Will: Evolution is a struggle in the natural world, plans are made, changed, then burnt to the ground and started again. We started with a simple idea, to make some dope ass menswear and the goal has not changed. We still make dope ass menswear and what will we do in the future is more of the same.... in the days of old I would have said *take over the world* but through a lot of therapy I have learned to suppress my inner Pinky and the Brain. Now I will be content with just the whole world wearing head to toe DTT.



Find out more about Death To Tennis Here – [here](#)

Shop the Domani Collection – [here](#)

3/9/2021

Death to Tennis – William Watson Interview

Photos by Alex Lee

Words by Sheenie Yip

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O.N.S Clothing x Death To Tennis Capsule Collection

— Fashion



April 01, 2020

In the latest capsule collaboration from Death to Tennis x O.N.S., the two companies compose an idyllic satire on athletic sportswear. It's one for the at-home heroes, the virtual Olympians with VR goggles strapped tightly around their heads and controllers gripped firmly in hand.

Titled "DOMANI" (Italian for "tomorrow"), the capsule includes a fresh release of shorts, hoodies, crewnecks, jackets, and everything in between.

As timely as they are witty, the collection blends functionality and comfort with blazingly bright colors

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hobby you've been dying to try, Zooming your friends, busting out an at-home workout, or a combination of the three—all while keeping a positive outlook for, well, *domani*.

Text by Vivian Cheng

Photos Courtesy of Death to Tennis + O.N.S.

Check out the collection below, and cop it [here](#). And if you're as psyched as we are, get it ASAP, because every purchase over \$250 will receive a free Village Crew Tee.



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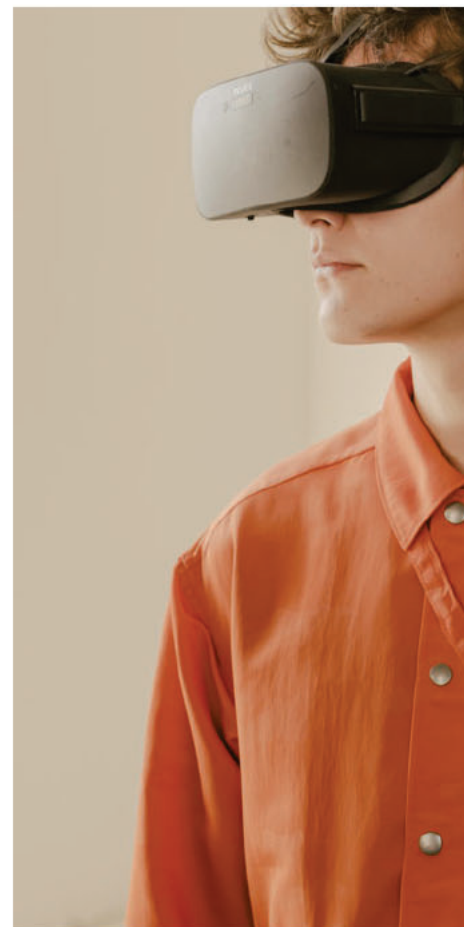
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O.N.S x Death To Tennis: DOMANI - Creative Lab

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The SS20 Creative Lab is a collaboration with independent, and at times, irreverent, NYC menswear brand, Death To Tennis.

Titled DOMANI (Italian for "Tomorrow"), the new capsule is a satirical look at the evolution of athletic sportswear as seen through the lens of modern-day aesthetes. The clothing takes cues from the heroics of at-home Olympians, couch-surfing marathoners, and hyper-productive stragglers. In the DOMANI dimension, velocity and comfort co-exist, function and leisure are equals, and tactical and technical themes are one and the same. The collection itself features ultra-comfy, double-knitted pieces alongside slick upgrades of beloved, sportswear staples. There are also bold bursts of print and color, unexpected silhouette options for outerwear, and removable "rig-bag" additions for the capsule's signature items.

As a whole, DOMANI cleverly blends the worlds of streetwear and sportswear— and as a future-facing hybrid, it aims higher and smartly sticks the landing.

Watch the collection here: <https://onsclothing.com/pages/death-t...>

Follow us at: <https://www.instagram.com/onsclothing/>

Credits:

Videographer: Derek Siyarngnork

Model: William Thaggard

Stylist: Mac Huelster

Hair/Grooming: John Biddick

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O·N·S

O.N.S Clothing

11 March 2020 · 🌐

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The O.N.S x Death to Tennis collection finally launched yesterday and on Thursday, 3/12 we are hosting an event to celebrate the collection!

Join us by RSVP'ing to the event (link in bio) and stop by the pop-up store tomorrow evening from 7-9 pm to see the Domani collection come into life.

@crzybtfllwines

@biereparisienne

@deathtotennis



DOMANI

O·N·S + DEATH TO TENNIS

LAUNCH PARTY

MARCH 12 | 4 PRINCE ST., NYC | 7-9PM